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Office of Current Intelligence

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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DOS review(s) completed.

25X1

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SUMMARY

25X1

EASTERN EUROPE

- ✓ 2. Yugoslav officials consider action against Albania untimely (page 3).

WESTERN EUROPE

3. Britain to ask European cooperation in liberalizing global trade (page 4).

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EASTERN EUROPE

2. Yugoslav officials consider action against Albania untimely:

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Josef Djerdja, one of the top Yugoslav Foreign Office officials, has emphasized to the American Embassy in Belgrade that there have been no Yugoslav military movements near the Albanian border. He stated that Yugoslavia strongly opposed any action which would lend support to Cominform charges of aggressive intentions toward Albania.

According to Djerdja, there is no reason to believe that Hoxha's control over the country has weakened since Stalin's death. He told the American Charge that while the collapse of the regime was inevitable because of deteriorating economic conditions and increasing popular discontent, the time for this event "was not in sight."

- 3 -

25X1A

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Comment: There is no reliable evidence that Yugoslavia is planning any overt actions against Albania.

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WESTERN EUROPE

3. Britain to ask European cooperation in liberalizing global trade:

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Foreign Secretary Eden and Chancellor of the Exchequer Butler, in addressing the Organization for European Economic Cooperation on 23 March, plan to ask the European countries to consider their own problems within the context of a "one world" economic system aimed at freeing both trade and currencies as widely as possible.

Butler will propose an immediate study of the implications of the convertibility of other currencies as well as sterling with a view to the subsequent relaxation of Britain's restrictions on trade with the Continent. He also will recommend consideration of revamping both the European Payments Union and the OEEC to permit a wider multilateral payments system.

Comment: These statements are aimed at reassuring the European countries about British trade plans, but Italy and France in particular are more interested in immediate relief from the burden of Britain's import restrictions.

In conversations with the Commonwealth, European countries and the United States, Britain is evidently seeking the widest possible exchange of views before committing itself on its own "new" trade policies.

- 4 -

25X1A

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